



## STORNOWAY PRIMARY PARENT COUNCIL

Minutes of Hybrid Meeting held at Stornoway Primary School & Teams

Wednesday 29th November 2023, 7PM

Parents Present:	Apologies:
Mairi Macmillan (Chair)	Emma Macsween (Treasurer)
Iain Bain	Claire Hobson
Laura-Jayne Davis	Christina Macdonald
Rhona Gallagher	Shonnie Macritchie
Karen Macdonald	Anne Macdonald
Sarah Maclean	Michelle Morrison
Carla Mackay	Clr. Francis Murray
Gillian Mackenzie	
Rhona Morrison	
Graham Macleod	
Mairi Macleod (Parent / Teacher rep)	
In Attendance:	
Peigi Nicolson (Head of School)	Karina Mackay (Principal Teacher Early Years)
Kathleen Macleod (Executive Head Teacher)	Catherine Macleod (Principal Teacher)
Charlie Nicolson	Clr. Duncan Macinnes
Online Attendance:	
Donalda Riddell (School Office)	Shona Shields
Anna Murray	Zerqa Mohammed
Alana	Karen Macleod
Anji Macritchie	Clr. Gordon Murray (joined mid-way through meeting)

### Welcome & Apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and apologies were noted.

### Election of Office Bearers

The Chair informed the meeting that, as advertised, there would be an extra session of business before the main meeting, to appoint a PC Committee and Office Bearers and discussion followed on the correct order of business.

- Mairi Macmillan confirmed she was happy to continue her current term as Chair.
- Emma Macsween had given apologies for the meeting but had indicated she is also happy to continue her current term as Treasurer.
- The Chair informed the meeting that prior to the AGM on 7<sup>th</sup> November Rhona Gallagher and Sarah Maclean had indicated they were stepping down from their respective roles as Vice Chair and Secretary.

The Chair indicated that since the AGM Gillian Mackenzie had volunteered to take on the role of Secretary and asked if anyone else present or online was interested in that role? There were no additional expressions of interest.

Mairi Macmillan nominated Gillian Mackenzie as Secretary, Sarah Maclean seconded the motion and the appointment was agreed by the meeting.

*At this point it became clear that the Teams link issued was not working for all parents and a new link was sent out. Four additional parents joined on-line and the meeting resumed.*

As well as the link not working it was indicated not all parents had received notice for the meeting or the first link and some were struggling to access relevant information on PC business. All other parents present indicated that they had received the GroupCall communication, the school agreed to look at what may be causing some parents to not receive notifications.

The Chair updated the new attendees online of the meeting progress so far and the appointment of Gillian Mackenzie as Secretary, the new attendees were asked if they were happy with the meeting to proceed or if anyone wanted to revisit the Secretary appointment. Anji Macritchie (newly joined online) indicated she would be interested in standing as Secretary also and it was agreed to put both nominations to a vote:

Carla Mackay nominated Anji Macritchie and Shona Shields seconded the motion.

The meeting voted on the appointment: Anji Macritchie (5) and Gillian Mackenzie (10)

Gillian Mackenzie was confirmed for the role of PC Secretary.

The Chair invited nominations to the role of Vice-Chair.

Anji Macritchie indicated Shonnie Macritchie was interested in standing as Vice-Chair, Mr Macritchie was not present but Charlie Nicolson formally proposed the nomination and Shona Shields seconded the motion.

Mairi Macleod nominated Sarah Maclean and Gillian Mackenzie seconded the motion.

The meeting voted on the appointment: Shonnie Macritchie (7) and Sarah Maclean (8)

Sarah Maclean was confirmed for the role of PC Vice-Chair.

#### **Appointment of PC Committee**

The Chair informed the meeting the Constitution allows for a PC Committee of minimum 10 and maximum 15 members, low parental engagement in recent terms has meant no formal committee has been in place to support the work of the PC Office Bearers but the encouraging levels of recent attendance make it more likely a committee can now be convened. Expressions of interest to join the committee were sought and agreed as follows:

- |     |                       |                                 |
|-----|-----------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1.  | Mairi Macmillan       | Chair                           |
| 2.  | Sarah Maclean         | Vice-Chair                      |
| 3.  | Gillian Mackenzie     | Secretary                       |
| 4.  | Emma Macsween         | Treasurer                       |
| 5.  | Carla Mackay          |                                 |
| 6.  | Iain Bain             |                                 |
| 7.  | Laura Jayne Davis     |                                 |
| 8.  | Shona Shields         |                                 |
| 9.  | Karen Macdonald       |                                 |
| 10. | Lynne Maciver         |                                 |
| 11. | Claire Hobson         | TBC                             |
| 12. | Mairi Macleod         | Parent / Teacher rep            |
| 13. | Charlie Nicolson      | Co-opted Community rep          |
| 14. | Eric Macleod (Strada) | Co-opted Active Schools rep TBC |

The Chair asked all those newly appointed to the committee to contact the PC email account to ensure contact details are held for everyone.

This element of business concluded the meeting moved on to the rest of the agenda.

#### **Minutes of previous Meeting & Matters Arising**

The minute of the previous meeting was proposed by Mairi Macmillan and seconded by Mairi Macleod as being an accurate record.

	ACTIVITY	LEAD / ACTION	WHEN
1	<b>School Polycrubb</b> Planning is ongoing through the winter for getting the poly-crubb up and running in the spring.	School	Completed
2	<b>School Cycle Project</b> Strada is willing to progress an application for cycling infrastructure on behalf of the school. Iain Bain agreed to act as PC liaison on this project.	School/Eric Macleod/Iain Bain	Update to next meeting
3	<b>Friends of Stornoway Primary</b>	PC/ Cllr. Gordon Murray	Point for review - Jan
4	<b>Parent Engagement</b> The improvement in parental in engagement was noted and appreciated, it was agreed to look at how this effort can be continued and built on going forward.	PC/ School	Point for review - Jan
5	<b>Stornoway Primary School Cookbook</b> The pupils have now selected their favourite school meals and the canteen staff have been approached to supply the recipes.	PC / School	Update for next meeting
6	<b>School Vision</b> This project has not proceeded but there was still a will to try and achieve a vision document on all aspects of the school's aspirations, objectives and potential.	Charlie Nicolson & Claire Hobson for PC/ <b>School &amp; Partners</b> The School agreed to convene a meeting to discuss.	Meeting planned for Jan 2024
7	<b>RSHP</b> Consultation with teachers and parents is concluded, partner organisations consultation is ongoing and the results will be analysed early Dec, with feedback planned for Term 3. The aim is to roll out teaching in 23/24 session. See note below re RSHP discussion.	School / Ed Dept./ PC PC to ask Ed Dept to confirm level of engagement from Sty Primary parents to gauge if the results received can be considered representative.  School agreed to check Group Call system to see who is getting alerts and check with parents on how effective it is for communication.	Update to next meeting.
8	<b>Christmas Lights</b> PC have agreed to meet outstanding costs of replacing the school Christmas lights (£2,500 quote received from ACES). External funding secured to date includes: £250 Co-op/ £200 BASF/ £1,000 PST ACES have agreed to contribute equipment to the replacement project at no charge & their team have volunteered to carry out the work at no cost. Meantime those volunteers have been busy on site getting the existing lights ready for the Fri 1 <sup>st</sup> switch-on.	School  School to put a note of thanks on Naidheachan	Update to future meeting.
9	<b>Review of traffic &amp; pedestrian flow around the school.</b> John 'Tubes' Macleod from the Comhairle has been to the school to carry out a review of afternoon / pick-up traffic flow and deemed the current arrangements to be working safely. Parents present requested he be asked back specifically to look at morning traffic which tends to be more chaotic.	School will contact the Council again to analyse traffic flow between 8:45 and 9:15, both front and back car parks.	Update to future meeting.

	Options for actioning improvements were discussed including clearer markings for pupils in the playground & a messaging campaign to parents.		
<b>10</b>	<b>New Sports Development</b> Since the previous meeting some site assessments have been carried out. It is unknown if the project will be in anyway affected / delayed by the recent cyber-attack on the Comhairle, were plans lost?	<b>CnES</b> EH agreed to ask Comhairle colleagues about any consequence for the project from recent loss of data.	Update to next meeting.
<b>11</b>	<b>Sports Opportunities</b> P6 & P7 Sports Clubs have been set up – football & rugby with shinty starting in January. The school are looking to set up P1-P5 clubs too but parental volunteers are needed and proving hard to recruit. The school are currently scoping exact schedules/need and specific time slots may make it easier to attract volunteers.	<b>School / Strada</b>  Anji volunteered to support	Update to future meeting
<b>12</b>	<b>Homework Club</b> Current arrangements were discussed: CnaG come into the school and are funded to provide a Gaelic homework club twice per week for GM pupils. There is a council operated After School Club but this is not a Homework Club. Many of those present felt this is a gap in current provision and there is a definite need in this area.	<b>The School/ PC agreed to look at options for delivery of homework club and extra curricular clubs that are non-sport orientated.</b> It was agreed to also discuss this gap in provision with the Ed Dept.	Update to future meeting.

- It was agreed that the January meeting of the new Committee will review the projects currently sitting open with the PC with a view to deciding if they stay on the agenda or if, however desirable they may be to achieve, they are unlikely to be actioned due to capacity constraints.

## RSHP

Anji Macritchie asked if the PC were partner consultees in the RSHP consultation? The EH confirmed no.

Sarah Maclean indicated this was because all parents had a direct chance to respond to the consultation with their own voice and it would have been difficult for the PC to take a position fair to all parents, given the diversity of opinions on this sensitive issue. Iain Bain suggested it would however be appropriate for the PC to take a position on whether parents felt the consultation overall had been adequate and feedback any concerns around the methodology or duration of the consultation. E.g. there has been concern expressed that parents were not able to comment on the content of the RSHP curriculum materials.

It was suggested that any feedback reports should make it clear that the PC are not partner consultees and should not be held accountable for any opinions expressed in the findings.

There was further discussion around the lack of effectiveness of GroupCall and the fact some parents may well have been excluded from the consultation entirely because of not receiving updates. It was noted important notices about school business are also shared on the PC Facebook page and via See-Saw and although not comprehensive these do offer other routes to share information with parents. Again the school promised to review the GroupCall system and ensure it is working effectively.

## Christmas Lights Switch-on Event – Friday December 1st

The event will start at 6pm with the lights due to be switched on at 6:30pm and aiming for a 7:30pm finish.

It was agreed to repeat donations instead of a fixed price for hot drinks, it is simple and did well last year. Hot drinks will be set up in the small hall with a one-way system to ease congestion.

Stalls will be set up in the gym to move people around the building – various activities are planned between school, PC and incoming booked stalls.

A P7 trip fundraising raffle is being organised and the P7s will be carol singing in Assembly Hall.

A good number of volunteers have already come forward and a last shout out will be done before allocating roles on Friday.

### School Update

- School Improvement Plan is progressing well – the National Writing Programme is being followed, teachers are being trained and are adopting new approaches which are showing very encouraging early results.
- An emphasis is being put on capturing and celebrating pupils wider achievements beyond school, this has been very successful and is excellent for building the children's confidence.
- The school took part in the Remembrance Sunday Service in Martins Memorial church and attended the wreath laying ceremony at the War Memorial.
- P3 & P4 led on this year's Children in Need activities with the school following a week of a Spots & Sports theme and a very successful Bring & Buy taking place on Friday 17<sup>th</sup> Nov, raising £1,882.
- The school are participating in the Sports Festival, currently it is the UniHoc tournament with other competitions to follow.
- The idea proposed by Charlie Nicolson to link the school to Isles FM has been taken up and the P7s have attended the Isles FM studio to record an advert for the Christmas lights switch-on event.
- School photos were taken w/b 20<sup>th</sup> Nov and hopefully will be ready to share with families pre-Christmas.
- The Co-op have awarded the school a £250 grant to buy polycrub equipment
- Intergenerational projects are back up and running incorporating all stages of the school.
- The Christmas tree donated by Willowglen Garden Centre has been delivered.
- The P1-4 Christmas concerts are in rehearsal, P5/P6/P7 will deliver a performance in Term 3.
- Santa is confirmed to come to the nursery and school Christmas parties in the last week of term & other Christmas dates such as festive jumper day and the Christmas lunch are scheduled.
- The Christmas pupil gifts have been purchased with support from the PC.
- The PC have also agreed to again purchase party treats for every class.

### Nursery

- Inductions have been held for the January nursery intake - 8 Gaelic & 7 English taking the nursery roll to 82 which is almost capacity.
- The nursery pupils participated in La na Gaidhlig.
- A project creating links between nursery pupils and P6 pupils which can evolve in to P1/ P7 buddies is being trialled and looking very positive.
- The nursery is also involved in Christmas activities
- The P1 transition programme for 2024 starts has begun.

### Finance Update

As Emma Macsween, Treasurer had offered apologies for the meeting the Finance Report was deferred.

### AOCB

**Cllr Gordon Murray:** suggested asking for donations from Councillor's Ward funding to support the school's Christmas activities. **The school agreed to ask the Pupil Council to draft a letter of request.**

**Anji Macritchie:** queried that there was apparently no signed PC constitution available and, given the noted concerns around GroupCall communications not reaching everyone and parents potentially being excluded from the PC process, suggested that **a point specifically looking at governance be put on the agenda for the next meeting**, allowing such matters to be properly addressed and given appropriate scrutiny. This was agreed and Sarah Maclean reassured that such an agenda point was already pencilled for the January PC meet.

**Charlie Nicolson:** expressed thanks for a recent donation to the Food Bank from Stornoway Primary pupils, their effort and consideration was noted and appreciated. Charlie went on to emphasise the poverty challenges facing many families and urged the PC to consider strategies that will alleviate some of these pressures. **Karen Macdonald suggested a Foodbank donation basket at the Christmas lights event and it was agreed to try and get this organised.**

The School confirmed the usual package of food vouchers & support to vulnerable families is being arranged for Christmas and this year they are also working with the Salvation Army to support their toy appeal.

Charlie also expressed gratitude to the school for the excellent response to this year's Shoebox appeal which this year is bound for Bulgaria.

**Sarah Maclean:** stated that the meeting had been structured to allow for an EGM where Office Bearers and the Committee could be appointed, combined with a meeting of usual PC business, to maximise use of everyone's time and to allow for discussion of the various Christmas activities coming up. The date originally set was 29<sup>th</sup> November, prior to the Christmas lights switch-on, however it had been brought to the attention of the PC that this was not in line with the Constitution which states 2 weeks full notice must be given for EGM's. Given that the full 2 week notice would take the meeting date to w/b 4<sup>th</sup> Dec, after the first big school Christmas event it was decided to poll parents on a preferred date and if a majority of parents were happy to proceed on the 29<sup>th</sup> to do so. A parent had asked that the results of the poll be shared with the meeting, these were: 21 not attending, 21 for 29<sup>th</sup> Nov and 13 for 6<sup>th</sup> Dec.

Anji Macritchie responded that it seemed unfair to see this as a comprehensive poll of parental opinion as it had already been identified that some parents weren't receiving GroupCall's where the poll was distributed, she and her husband being among those who had received no notice of the AGM, or any meetings or polls. Anji also said she'd been surprised to learn the meeting was taking place on 29<sup>th</sup> Nov as she understood the two dates being considered were both in December, she was assured the two dates circulated were always 29<sup>th</sup> Nov or 6<sup>th</sup> Dec. Anji suggested that this discussion highlighted exactly why the PC's governance needed to be looked at and the terms of the constitution followed appropriately.

Sarah replied that while she was sorry to challenge the point made she felt the focus on governance and the structure of the PC was detracting from the many and varied pupil related activities that had been discussed at the meeting, especially given that assurance had already been offered that governance would be looked at in January. The PC relies on volunteers who work hard between meetings to keep things moving and those currently leading the PC felt demoralised by recent communications received, and points raised repeatedly at this meeting, that imply there is cause for these efforts and decisions to be proven, explained and justified.

The need to use email to enter dialogue with the PC was highlighted as preferable for addressing any concerns but it was noted that only one parent to date had made contact in that way.

#### **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The Head of School, Peigi Nicolson thanked all parents for attending and it was agreed that the date of the next meeting would be a Tuesday in Term 3, date tbc.